

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OK to Receive Funds for National Weather Center

Washington, DC – Today, Congress approved, 411-15, an appropriations bill which included \$8 million for a new National Weather Center laboratory in Norman.

“The University of Oklahoma is ideal for this national weather facility which will help save lives, homes, and businesses,” said Istook. **“Top-notch researchers can study severe weather first-hand, so they can develop better forecasting and warning systems to be used across the country.”**

The \$8 million in the Commerce, Justice, and State FY 2002 appropriations bill will be combined with \$8 million included in an earlier bill overseen by Istook for a total of \$16 million. The funds will be combined with state funds for the National Weather Center’s new facilities at the University of Oklahoma. This center will improve research and forecasting for the nation’s severe weather and benefit the university’s meteorology program.

“Congressman Istook’s leadership as chairman of a key House subcommittee has been extremely important in moving the weather center project forward,” said OU President David L. Boren. **“Chairman Istook, Congressman J.C. Watts and Sen. Don Nickles, in particular, using their House and Senate leadership positions, have worked together to get provisions in both House and Senate bills to move the Weather Center another step toward construction. This center will make Oklahoma the leader in the world in weather and climate research and will help build a new high-tech economy for our state. I very much appreciate the hard work and long hours spent by Chairman Istook on this project.”**

The money will be used for phase II of the National Weather Center. This center will be a world-class research-operations-education environment in the midst of the Great Plains, the nation’s best natural laboratory for weather and climate research. The center provides a modern facility to house the NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory and the national Storm Prediction Center, which conduct research and forecasting of the nation’s severe weather. Just as important, the facility will bring together some of the nation’s best climate researchers to turn basic science into practical benefits such as enhanced safety and improved technology.

The Senate is expected to vote on the bill shortly. It will then go to the President for his signature.